



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: January 10, 2013

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CITY OF INDIANAPOLIS, UNITED WAY KICK OFF WINTER ASSISTANCE FUND *Area Funders Step Up to Ensure Local Residents Who Need Help Most Stay Warm*

INDIANAPOLIS (January 10, 2013) — The City of Indianapolis and United Way of Central Indiana kicked off the 2013 Winter Assistance Fund (WAF) drive today by accepting \$265,000 from five local donors, putting the fund within \$85,000 of the goal of \$350,000 set by United Way and the City of Indianapolis.

"The Winter Assistance Fund is one of Indianapolis' great collaborative traditions supporting our community's needs," said Mayor Greg Ballard. "I want to express our gratitude to these generous organizations for their phenomenal contributions. All of our successes as a city come from great partnering such as this."

Start-up contributions, which put the fund at 76 percent of its goal, include \$100,000 from Citizens Energy Group; \$65,000 from Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust; \$50,000 from Indianapolis Power & Light; \$30,000 from The Indianapolis Foundation, a CICF affiliate, and \$20,000 from the James Proctor Fund for Aged Men and Women.

Help with utility bills remains one of the most sought-after needs of callers to Connect2Help's 2-1-1 line, said Christie Gillespie, United Way's director of agency services. "Helping people stay in their homes and warm is not only the humane thing," said Gillespie, "it also is a 'must' to avoiding homelessness and its downward spiral."

The Winter Assistance Fund is for Marion County residents whose income exceeds guidelines for government energy assistance, yet still have difficulty keeping up with high winter heating bills. Last year, the fund helped 2,373 individuals stay warm. Residents may dial 2-1-1 to find the nearest neighborhood community center or township trustee office accepting Winter Assistance Fund applications.

Customers of Citizens Energy Group and IPL will receive Winter Assistance Fund contribution envelopes in gas and electric bills, making it easier for individuals to give. Contributions are tax deductible and can also be made online at www.uwci.org/waf, or by mailing a check to: **United Way of Central Indiana, Winter Assistance Fund, P.O. Box 660054, Indianapolis, IN, 46266-0054.**